

All Bark and No Bite

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Category: IT (2017)

Genre: Aged-Up Character(s), Belligerent Sexual Tension, Fluff, Language, M/M, Making Out, Richie calls Eddie other E names sometimes because I think it's hilarious, Stan is literally the Man, They are like 17/18

Language: English

Characters: Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Mike Hanlon, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris

Relationships: Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier

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Summary:

Or: Two Chaotic Gays Somehow Get Their Shit Together Before Stan is Forced to Intervene

1. Allure

"C'mon, Eds! Don't be such a...wuss." Richie whined, swapping out his original insult at last second as Eddie glared at him. He was more afraid of Bev though, and she was glaring over Eddie's head. Even though the Losers had progressed to high school, sans Mike technically, Eddie was still the shortest (and cutest, not that Richie would admit it to his face).

Eddie sighed so forcefully that a puff of air made his dark hair flutter, crossing his arms in the process. He's a dramatic little fucker, that's for sure, Richie thought with admiration. He loved ticking the smaller boy off. The fire in his eyes, which was totally hot, did not go with his pink pastel fanny-pack (which was not hot, but adorable).

"So I'm a wuss because I don't want to contract various diseases from eating a repulsive flower? And don't call me Eds, asshole."

The flower did indeed look hideous. It was an odd shade of yellow with strange pods on the stem, and Ben and Bill agreed that it wasn't native to the region.

Richie removed his thick lenses to roll his eyes, making a show of it before jamming his glasses back onto his face. "Duh, Eleanor. I did it! And I'm fine, see? Do you wanna inspect my tongue?" He waggled his eyebrows suggestively. Eddie scoffed, but his cheeks tinged pink. "You're fine because you have a lead stomach, jerk."

"He's r-right," Bill piped up. Everyone nodded in agreement, recalling the time that Richie had consumed a lizard on a dare back in seventh grade with no consequences.

"That's because it's all in your head, ya hippochondira."

"Hypochondriac," Stan supplied without looking up from his comic book. Eddie shook his head.

"You drive me crazy, you know? One of these days you're gonna do something so impulsive, it's gonna get you in trouble."

Richie grinned. "Aw, are you worried about me, Eds? I can handle myself. Better than your mom can, in fact."

Eddie stepped right up into Richie's personal space, eliciting a low 'oooh' from the other Losers. "Really?" he challenged quietly. "What are you going to do now, Tozier?"

Notes for the Chapter:

So I've rewritten portions of this story recently, and I'm trying a technique called free indirect discourse, in which the character's thoughts are sometimes indistinguishable from the omniscient third person narrative. Please let me know what you think! Also, this is not related to my other Reddie story, *Hunger Like a Storm*.

2. Anxiety

Richie gulped. Eddie's eyes were magnets, drilling into Richie and daring him to move closer. So, Richie did the one thing he could in order to avoid grabbing him up and kissing the daylights out of him in front of everyone: he cracked a terrible joke.

"Well, the weather is just fine up here Esteban, thanks for asking, Edith." The others groaned.

"That was awful." Mike deadpanned. Beverly watched Stan mark down another tally and chuckled. It was either the amount of times Richie had called Eddie literally anything other than his name, she thought, or the amount of time that Eddie had won one of their proverbial pissing contests (both of which were quite high).

Eddie was smirking now, a satisfied gleam in his eye. "Just as I thought. You're all bark and no bite, Richard Allen Tozier." With that, he whirled around and marched over to the stack of comic books next to Stan and picked one up.

Stan stoically covered the list of tally marks by slipping it into Bev's pocket, which nearly made her lose it, especially when she glimpsed its heading in meticulous capital letters: TIMES I WAS FORCED TO WITNESS IDIOTIC MATING RITUALS (EXCLUDING BIRDS).

Richie suddenly realized that he was still frozen in place and hurriedly plopped down by Ben. It wasn't my best recovery, he thought, but I panicked...and if...or when...I finally get to kiss Eds, I want it to be just the two of us...

Ben poked his shoulder. "Rich? What are you thinking about? Did eating that flower finally get to you?"

"I don't know what you're talking about, he always looks constipated." Eddie retorted before Richie could reply, offering him a shit-eating grin.

Richie gasped dramatically, placing his hands over his heart. "It's not my fault, Edwardo! Your mom makes me emotionally constipated."

This remark started a grass war, and soon enough everyone was covered in streaks of dirt and clumps of grass. The Losers were back to their usual antics.

Still, all Richie could think about for the rest of the day was that look Eddie had had on his face. The two teased each other all of the time, and Richie definitely wanted more, but he was also terrified of destroying their friendship.

Later that night, he made up his mind. No more waiting. He was going to see Eddie and make his intentions clear.

3. Adrenaline

Summary for the Chapter:

This chapter features Steve's bat and a reference to the 90's film because I said so.

Eddie squinted out into the dim gray smear that the late night fog had made of his yard. A light sleeper, he had been roused by an incredibly loud crash. It sounded as if someone-or something-had knocked over the garbage bins. Knowing that his mother could sleep through a tornado, he grabbed the baseball bat that Richie had given him for such an occasion. It had seemed a little bit silly at the time, especially since it was also a hulking tetanus stick that Eddie kept buried in the recesses of his closet (it had nails sticking out of it haphazardly towards the top, and his mother would kill him before the tetanus if she ever found it). It did make him feel safer, though, and the gesture had brought a touch of warmth to Eddie's chest. Richie acted crude, but he was a sweetheart underneath the miles of rude jokes, impulsive actions, unsanitary behavior, and the profanity.

There! Eddie definitely heard another crash. Whatever it was, it was too big to be a raccoon, and Eddie was positive that there were no bears in Maine.

He jolted as a loud "FUCK!" cracked through the night, almost losing his grip on the Murder Bat of Rust (TM).

Hmm. Bears certainly didn't swear.

Thankfully, Eddie recognized the timber of Richie's aggravated voice, and when he suddenly appeared out of the fog and in front of Eddie's window, Eddie dropped the bat and pushed the window open. If he hadn't spoken before emerging out of the gloom, Eddie probably would have walloped him hard enough to give his future grand-kids a concussion (again, if the tetanus didn't kill him first...maybe Eddie would buy them both aluminum bats).

"Looking feisty there, Eduardo. Thanks for not beating the shit out of me," Richie joked, eyeing the rejected baseball bat.

"It was a close call, you goon," Eddie reprimanded him, ignoring the increasingly bizarre nicknames in order to address his potentially dangerous behavior. "What were you banging around for? You couldn't just climb the tree and be done with it? You do that all of the time, maybe then I wouldn't have nearly mistaken you for an extremely terrible thief."

"I dropped my damn glasses," Richie grumbled, "and it's a miracle that I found them. Thankfully, I know your backyard like the back of your-"

Eddie slapped his palm over Richie's mouth, hoping to deflect his adrenaline and make it seem like annoyance. "Beep beep, asshole."

Richie merely shot him an impish look that said, "Really? That's the best you can do?" and proceeded to lick Eddie's hand. He managed to resist until Richie started trying to be seductive about it, at which point Eddie recoiled like he had been electrocuted (he essentially had been, not that he would ever admit it). Richie grinned and continued with his spiel. "But I didn't wanna push my luck. I know your mom sleeps like the dead, but I'd hate to get you in trouble."

"Thanks I guess," Eddie mumbled, pushing away the thoughts that Richie's ambiguous innuendo had managed to conjure up. He thought the other boy was serious in his advances, but at times it was hard to tell. Part of him wished that Richie had taken the bait earlier-he'd never really pushed him before. At the same time, he was relieved. It was mushy, maybe, but he kind of wanted any and all of their first times to be private.

Richie slung an arm around Eddie's thin shoulders. "Anything for you, Eds. Actually, I uh, kinda wanted to give you something."

"If you call me chuckalicious again, and that's all you came here for, I'm going to push you out of a window," Eddie stated without any real malice. He studied Richie for a moment. The devilish look in his eyes had disappeared, and he actually looked serious for once. "What is it?"

Richie swallowed hard. "Let me show you," he whispered.

Understanding crashed all around Eddie as Richie leaned down to meet him, and a hot wave of relief, joy, and desire nearly swept him off of his feet. Perhaps sensing this, Richie caged the smaller boy in his arms as their lips clashed together like hungry ocean waves, desperate to swallow whatever resided at the surface.

"It's about time," Eddie muttered as they finally drew apart for breath. Richie's eyes gleamed, and he swiftly began to nip at the column of Eddie's throat in response.

"What was that about me being all bark and no bite, Kaspbrak?" Eddie groaned.

"Just shut up and kiss me already, before Stan uses his freaky powers of premonition to text us and gloat."

(Stan did not, as a matter of fact, text. He called, and Eddie threw a pillow at the phone while Richie swung the bat around in the background and nearly concussed himself. But that's another story.)